DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 109 921 FL 007 020

AUTHOR Keller, Howard H.
TITLE The Place of a Topical Vocabulary Checklist in Foreign Language Teaching.
PUB DATE Apr 75
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Kentucky Interdisciplinary Conference on Linguistics (Richmond, Kentucky, April 4-5, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Form Classes (Languages); Instructional Aids; *Language Aids; *Language Instruction; *Second Language Learning; *Teaching Methods; Verbal Development; Vocabulary; *Vocabulary Development; Word Frequency; *Word Lists; Word Study Skills

ABSTRACT

Teaching techniques in vocabulary learning have not kept pace with development in other areas of language pedagogy, and yet the large number of words that students must learn demands on approach that will bring order and system into the process of vocabulary acquisition. The solution to this problem is a topical vocabulary checklist in two versions: 7,000 words for complete coverage of a language, and 2,000 words for bringing perspective and arrangement into basic courses. This topical system differs from earlier vocabulary lists in that it contains a frequency index number for each word presented. The system divides all areas of daily language use into 46 major topics with logical subtopics for larger categories. The list is in English with blanks next to each word for active use by students. The checklist reduces vast amounts of vocabulary items to manageable levels, and gives the student the following advantages over previous approaches: he is always aware of his progress; he has visible subgoals; he can emphasize areas of special interest; he knows his strengths and weaknesses in active language use; and he has a systematic and instructive device for periodic reviews of the language he is studying. There is a definite place in the curriculum for a methodological approach to vocabulary learning. (Author)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED109921

The Place of a Topical Vocabulary Checklist in Foreign Language Teaching

Howard H. Keller
Department of Foreign Languages
Murray State University
Murray, Kentucky 42071

FL007020

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

The Problem

Teaching techniques in vocabulary expansion and development have not kept pace with innovations in teaching phonology and grammar. The literature on phonological, morphological, and syntactical studies is rich, but the past 20 years have seen little emphasis on a monumental task that every student faces: the need to actively learn some 2,000 words and to recognize an additional 5,000 words that might be used in everyday speech. (Lado 1964:117 gives these figures as a result of examining general service wordlists. Vocabulary measurement is a complex process, and these representative figures are adequate for the present study.)

Many valuable studies have been made concerning mnemonic devices for limited groups of words, but little attention has been given to the problem that a student must know several thousand words before he can handle a foreign language with any degree of fluency. A mass of 7,000 words is literally an enormous problem, and the diversity of these words extends to every specialty of daily conversation.

While many words can be learned as part of a series, either 'rigid' (numerals, days of the week, months of the year) or 'loose' (members of a family, parts of the body, rooms of a house, animals, trees, foods, etc.), the vast majority of vocabulary items are introduced in random order. At the end of two or three semesters of study the student possesses a verbal chaos of randomly ordered nouns, verbs, adjectives and assorted adverbs, prepositions, idioms, and additional words of grammatical significance. Nouns predominate, but even these are divided between the easier

to learn concrete nouns and the more elusive abstract nouns. Eaton 1961 lists 7,000 words which can be divided into approximately 3,500 nouns, 1,800 verbs, and 1,500 adjectives and adverbs.[2] After the first semester of hard work memorizing many words the student sees that there are still several thousand words to be learned, and he has no idea of the value or the usefulness of the words that he has already memorized. He does not even know if there is a definite or recognizable end to the entire process, a point at which he will be able to say: 'I now know this language.' A large part of the reason that students feel that languages are too hard is that each week of language study brings another new group of words to be memorized, and leaves a larger store of words to be remembered and reviewed.

In view of these large numbers of vocabulary items presented in language courses it is imperative that an element of order and system be present during the learning process.

I propose a published checklist of all words which a student is likely to encounter in his language studies. This list will be divided into topical categories, and nouns will fill out and define the principal word groups. Verbs, adjectives, and adverbs will be listed under the appropriate noun categories. Each word entry will also carry a number from an authoritative word frequency dictionary indicating the frequency of that word. For most efficient use the list might be printed in two versions: a complete list of 7,000 words and a beginning student's version of 2,000 words. This topical checklist could be divided into 46 categories of differing lengths (see Table 1), and the list will be published in English. The checklist will serve as a type of preprinted notebook with

a place for the student to write each new word as he encounters it either in a classroom environment or in independent reading. There will be an alphabetical index to permit rapid word location or transfer of large numbers of words from dictionaries. Since the list is in English it can be used uniformly for all European languages, and there will be blank spaces at the end of each topic for students' own additions.[3] This uniformity has other learning advantages which I will discuss below.

Traditional Vocabulary Selection Methods

The vast majority of new textbooks present vocabulary items which have been selected on the basis of word frequency. The textbook author chooses a particular frequency list and decides on the frequency range that he wishes to include. A first year text may include the first 1,000 words, a two-year book may extend to 3,000 words, and an advanced reader may emphasize the third or fourth thousand ranges with an appendix listing the more basic words which the student is already presumed to know. (Wilkins 1972: 112-14 adds a number of practical considerations to keep in mind when using the alleged panacea of frequency lists.)

Word frequency is not the sole criterion for vocabulary selection, however. Additions and subtractions must be made to a corpus defined by frequency for a variety of reasons. Series must be rounded out, and some words must be added to provide some sense and life to reading passages or conversations that are subtly written around the selected basic words. Words of low frequency are added because of grammatical or formal criteria. Items of similar structure in both native and target languages are included to point out the large number of similarities

in the two languages. Allen 1972: 121-26 contains a detailed section on cognate types and useful teaching devices to present them. Lado 1964: 127-30 also gives lists of cognates and series which he describes in degrees of difficulty.

'False friends,' words that have a similar form but a very different meaning, are included to prevent otherwise inevitable misunderstandings: Ger. 'das Gift, die Lust, bekommen;' Fr. 'magazin, douche;' Sp. 'sin embargo, pieza, pan, pie;' Rus. 'familija, gost', more.' Other infrequent words come from the need to illustrate grammatical rules, exceptions to grammatical rules, or productive derivational patterns. Wilkins 1972: 113 enlarges on these inclusions and says that many words are not chosen with the learners' needs in mind but rather are included for grammatical purposes.

The result of these additions and subtractions is often a hodge-podge of vocabulary that reflects the author's personal attempt to select a list of words of high usefulness while trying to satisfy the sometimes conflicting demands of frequency and pedagogical necessity. My study of the ten most widely used texts in Russian shows a great variety in vocabulary items presented, although most of these texts advertise that the words were selected 'on scientific principles' from an established and authoritative word count.

The number and variety of frequency studies for English or for the various foreign languages militate against uniformity or standardization in vocabulary selection. For example, in Russian there are three lists that are widely used, but there are great differences among them. Josselson

1953 is based on texts from both the 19th and 20th centuries, while Steinfeldt 1963 gives the modern Soviet usage and Vakar 1966 is an American word count of Soviet usage that differs greatly from Steinfeldt. (See Vakar 1967 and Paternost 1967 for a comparison of Vakar 1966 and Josselson 1953 and for an analysis of the most basic 300 words in both studies omitted by some or all of the leading textbooks of Russian.)

In reality it is probably just as well that there is no rigid universal 'minimum vocabulary list' that each basic text must conform to. In most cases the more basic words and categories will appear, and a text with passages written around a standardized frequency list will be rather sterile and uninteresting. However, the proposed vocabulary checklist will serve a useful function in listing all the words in a given text and in giving both teacher and student an overview of the areas covered by the vocabulary items of a particular textbook.

The index of a textbook will give the student an idea of the 30 or 40 grammatical rules that he must master, and in many cases he will also get an idea of the subjects covered in reading selections, pattern dialogs, and conversations. Very few books contain vocabulary review sections, however, and no text gives a meaningful or detailed summary of all the vocabulary items presented for student memorization. If a student is to use a text for one or two years of studies, it is of great benefit to have a perspective or orientation of the vocabulary covered as well as an index of the grammatical rules.[4]

Traditional Topical Vocabulary Texts

For as long as people have studied languages there have always been supplementary vocabulary lists. In fact one of the oldest types of published language texts is the traveller's phrase book. Specialized situations of tourism such as being in a postoffice, restaurant, hospital, or on a train, boat, plane, etc. always require a specialized vocabulary of words and phrases that a traveller might reasonably be expected to use. (In many cases these words may have never even been covered at the beginning level of studies in that language. Parts of a car or engine are necessary to know if the car breaks down in a foreign country, and yet it is impractical to teach these words before the advanced level of language study.) Books in the Berlitz, Langenscheidt, Polyglott, Cortina, and Hugo series are widely published and often serve as the first systematic presentation of a language for many students and travellers. Grammatical rules in these phrase books are few, and in many instances they are even relegated to the introduction or preface. The number of such topical phrase books is often greater than the number of formal textbooks in a given language, and these vocabulary guides are often the only widely available source for studying less widely used languages such as Icelandic, Finnish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Turkish, etc.

There has been a great tradition in Europe of topical review lists for language courses at all levels of elementary and high school instruction. L'interprete Larousse, Editions Ophrys, and the Ernst Klett Verlag are among the many publishers who have produced topical review systems for both modern and classical languages. The Klett series is particularly well done in that it has an individual volume for seven languages, and the topical

categories and individual words are identical for all seven languages. This uniformity is useful for a learner who wishes to measure or compare his progress in two or more languages at the same time. The Klett system is based on a presentation of 2,000 core words (Grundwortschatz) and an additional 2,500 words (Aufbauwortschatz) that round out everyday categories and (so it is claimed) account for 95% of any 'normal' text or conversation in that language. [5]

The only other system of topical listings with a standardized presentation for several languages is the excellent East German Bildwörterbuch series. [6] This group of dictionaries is better suited to research use rather than active use, since they only contain concrete nouns and go into minute detail in each of several hundred technical illustrations.

One of the best American contributions to the field of topical vocabulary texts is Katzner 1962. This Russian vocabulary review is a handsome hardbound volume of 478 pages, and is almost entirely devoted to three sections of nouns (3340), verbs (1300), and adjectives (800). There are almost no exclusions of any significance in the list. The nouns are arranged by topic, and the verbs and adjectives are listed in separate categories without reference to the noun arrangement. For this reason they lack a visible system of order or categorization. The Katzner text is a beautifully made book, but ironically this fact defeated its purpose since the resulting high price put it out of the reach of students. It is nevertheless tempting to speculate how useful it would be for students of French, Spanish, and German if they had the

wide scope of a standardized Katzner arrangement available in these languages.[7]

All of these topical vocabulary texts share one fault: they give the user no indication of the relative value of the various words presented in a topical series. When a student who has devoted much time and energy to learning 1,000 words suddenly sees from 5,000 to 7,000 words of daily use spread before him, he could easily panic. Common sense would tell him that names of berries, grains, fruits, trees, etc., may not be of immediate importance, but the student has no way of knowing which of the many abstract nouns, for example, are more useful than others. The student will easily see that 'temple, eyelid, eyebrow, nostril, knuckle, knee, ankle' are definitely less important than 'head, eye, nose, finger, leg, foot', but it is still difficult for anyone to evaluate the relative importance of individual verbs and adjectives. There is a definite place among the multitude of published language study aids for a complete topical vocabulary review text that includes a frequency annotation for each word.[8]

Student use of a topical vocabulary review

Context helps a student learn and retain a larger number of new vocabulary words. A random arrangement of new words (e.g. alphabetical order or the order introduced by reading passages in textbooks) significantly reduces the number of words a student will retain in a learning period. Each new vocabulary item encountered brings to the student's mind a vivid picture of the object or concept, and the student must constantly 'shift gears' as he goes down a randomly arranged list of unrelated words. When this random mix is limited to the same part of speech, progress is

progress is still slow, but when a textbook vocabulary list mixes nouns, verbs, and adjectives together, there is an even stronger detriment to the efficiency of the learning process.

It is obvious that a student will recall more easily that Ger. Bucht is 'bay' if he sees Bucht in the environment 'See, Meer, Fluss, Bucht, Hafen, Küste, Strand' than in the environment 'Buch, Buche, Büchse, Bucht, Buckel'. The question still remains: Is this cheating? Do these topical 'hints' give a student a sense of false security? Not really, since in his actual contact with the language the student will be encountering these words in meaningful contexts, and will seldom be called upon to translate unrelated words in flash-card sequence. Brooks (1964: 185) states that the presentation of two languages so that the eye can embrace both of them at the same time ... may be harmful to the learner. However, a topical list has its own structure, and a parallel list of foreign words would tend to form a parallel structure. There would be less temptation to constantly refer to the English columns when the foreign language column makes a coherent structure of its own.

If the student accepts the fact that the list is complete and presents 'all there is to know' about a language, he will place his confidence in the list as making a valid statement in itself about the language. At this point the topical checklist can exert a teaching force of its own. If the student is using the shorter version of the list (e.g. the most basic 2,000 or 3,000 words) or the complete version of the list, he will be working within short, manageable topics and subtopics of 10 to 30 words each. When an intermediate student sees that he already knows

15 out of the 25 words for parts of the body, let us say, he will then want to round out his knowledge of that category and learn the remaining 10 words. The topical categories will break down the vast number of 'foreign' words into manageable categories for the student.

Students at all levels are continually faced with the need for periodic vocabulary reviews. When the student uses the complete topical checklist he has at all times an overall perspective of the language as a background for his review. The student will not only see how much he already knows, but he will also be able to measure his progress against attaining a finite 'end' of learning that language. The student will continually be able to see how his already extensive and detailed knowledge of vocabulary measures against an ordered overview of the entire language.

The importance of being able to see 'the end' of learning a specific language cannot be overemphasized. Learning 7,000 words is a great effort, and the student is constantly tempted to think that he will never learn the language he is studying. For this reason the topical orientation serves a very useful purpose. A list that is divided into topics and that contains frequency annotations permits the learner to modify his goal and to set up intermediate learning goals. Given the number and brevity of individual categories, the learner can gauge the depth that he wishes to go in each semantic topic. A chemistry or physics specialist will want to complete the topics of science, element, mineral, tool, nature, and then perhaps expand his vocabulary beyond the list while using the published categories as a guide and a point of

departure. A person learning a foreign language for travel purposes will want to concentrate on the topics of travel, culture, literature, communication, customs, city, food, etc. A businessman assigned to a foreign country will first want to master the minimum specialized vocabulary in business, money, finance, occupation, management, technology. The businessman will also want to have an additional vocabulary competence in the general areas of daily life (food, house, world, culture) with which he is likely to come into contact during his residence in a foreign country.

It is obvious that people with specialized interests will learn a language faster and more efficiently if they can get a well-defined view of their specialized professional areas of vocabulary. They can master the specialty words that they use in their profession first, and then reach out to other areas of importance.

A prime factor in increasing the student's rate of learning is that the student be kept informed of the progress that he is making. The list gives the student a continual view of what he already knows and what remains to be learned. As mentioned above, the student also has a running evaluation of the importance (in terms of frequency groups) of what he does not yet know. Each time the student adds words in the target language to the list, he reduces the number of words to be learned, and this becomes a visible process. If the student must discontinue his studies of the language at any time, he has in the list a statement of the level he has reached in every category. If he wishes to resume his studies at a later date, he does not need to re-learn the many words which

he already knows.

When the student has an opportunity to speak the language in its native country, he will always have a general idea of his limitations in conversation, and will be better able to 'tailor' the things he wants to say to the vocabulary that is at his disposal. Even though a language can contain some 7,000 items of daily importance, a learner can still be aware of his mastery of a vocabulary. He will know what he knows and will also know what he doesn't know.

A topical vocabulary checklist has an unusual use for students of a widely taught language who want to learn a related but infrequently taught language. Many people who have mastered French, German, Russian, or Spanish have a desire to learn closely related languages such as: Portugese, Italian, Rumanian (for students of French or Spanish); Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish (for students of German); Polish, Ukrainian, Czech, Serbocroatian, Bulgarian (for students of Russian). The similarity of German and Danish can serve as a good example. Even a fleeting glance at Danish tells a student of German that the vocabularies are quite similar. The student may decide that it would be enjoyable to know some Danish for research, business, or travel, so he decides to find out just how similar the two languages are. Rather than learn new words in Danish that have no connection with his vocabulary in German, he decides to 'match' his knowledge of new words in Danish to the German words that he already knows. To cite an exaggerated example, the learner realizes that it would be silly to know 'ham' and 'beef' in German but 'bacon' and

'lamb' in Danish.

With a second blank copy of the checklist the student can look up and fill in from Danish the same words which he has already learned in German. At all times the student has the same advantages of order, logical groupings, and contextual similarity that he had when he worked at filling out the list for German. As with his first foreign language he can decide to deepen his knowledge in some topics and neglect all but the most frequent words in other topics.

Table 2 lists some words from the categories World and Time and shows how similar the Scandinavian languages are to German and English. The table also gives a good idea of how the list might be employed for learning the given words of high frequency.

It is easier for a person to learn a second foreign language since he uses the same techniques and benefits from the same insights that he developed in learning the first foreign language. If the element of order is introduced in organizing the vocabulary of the second foreign language, the learning process becomes even more efficient, and the learner has more control over the areas that he wants to concentrate on or skip over.

Teacher use of a topical vocabulary review

The language instructor also benefits from a published systematic list of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. He can use the list to prepare periodic review sheets for his students in much the same manner that students might do so on their own. A more valuable use, however, is that the teacher can obtain his own overview of the vocabulary items

covered in his particular textbook. As I noted in stating the problem, there is a great diversity in the range of vocabulary words in the first and second year texts available for a given language. A close examination of this question leaves one with the feeling that many words are included by pure chance.

The instructor of a beginning course can be sure that his text will probably have a satisfactory treatment of words pertaining to time, family, house, body, school, but he has no easy way to determine which less central topics his text covers. Some texts have marked leanings toward diverse categories or category combinations such as business, war, military, science, literature, culture, animal, plant. Other texts dwell on abstract topics such as measurement, spatial, phenomenon, society, custom, management, communication, mind-intellect. Even within a 'standard' category one text will include 'grandfather, grandmother, nephew, niece' while another text will omit these but include 'grandson, granddaughter, cousin'. A teacher with a detailed overview of the text that he is using has a much better idea of the supplementary material that he needs to prepare. He has a good view of the general strengths and weaknesses of his students' vocabularies, and knows the range of words his students can use in preparing compositions or conversations.

The language teacher can use a topical checklist to rate new textbooks or other established texts that are considered for adoption. An hour or two is all that is needed to prepare a checklist for each book (either directly or using the index/glossary at the back). Each book can then be quickly judged, and the relative strengths and weaknesses in the present-

ation of basic words and specific topics become readily apparent.

The vocabulary content of individual texts is rarely considered in evaluation procedures at the high school and college level, and yet this factor is as important as grammar explanations or as dialog and reading presentations in textbook selection. For a student who goes no higher than his beginning one or two year course, the vocabulary in the text he uses often represents 'the whole language' for him.

Conclusion

A topical checklist with reliable frequency annotations is a device that is needed in present language courses. Language teaching is a profession that is concerned with the presentation of large numbers of words in a foreign language to students who do not always have the highest motivation. Any device that brings order and perspective into this process and makes it an easier or more efficient one is very welcome.

Vocabulary review lists deserve a definite place in the curriculum of both beginning and advanced courses. The instructor can use the topical arrangements for preparing review and examination material as well as evaluating textbooks and graded material. However, a topical list has its maximum benefit when a student uses it actively to review and expand his own vocabulary. A student who habitually uses the list as a notebook is learning his language much more efficiently than a student who jots down ~~the~~ new words in the random order in which he encounters them.

Frequent use of the list gives the user valuable insight into the fact that no two languages translate each other on a one-to-one basis.

The attempted standardization of the list will cause students to see that some English concepts have no direct equivalents in other languages. For example, 'afternoon' exists in English, French, and German, but not in Russian, and changes to 'evening' at a different time in Spanish. German has no really direct equivalent for words such as 'combination, efficient, frustrated, to remember, to realize'. Rus. ruka means both 'hand' and 'arm' and noga includes both 'foot' and 'leg'. Fr. doigt can mean either 'finger' or 'toe' depending on context. There is an endless list of similar examples. If a student becomes aware of these problems as a result of his own work with the list, he will have a more immediate feeling for the fact that languages have both universal and unique elements in their representation of reality.

No topical list will ever be exhaustive or contain all the latest words of a language. If there are blank spaces for the student to add new words and develop categories of special interest to him, the checklist will enjoy wide student use and will be a useful teaching aid. An attractive and compact format will enable the list to succeed in its goal of reducing vast numbers of vocabulary items to workable levels.

Today's students avoid language study because they imagine that learning a second language is a difficult and endless task. A properly prepared list lays bare the imagined complexity of language vocabulary and encourages the student to work toward a series of easily realized goals.

Footnotes

[1] I wish to thank the Murray State University Committee on Institutional Research and its chairman, Dr. Kenneth E. Harrell, for a grant which will permit computer compilation of the topical vocabulary checklist mentioned in this study.

[2] Allen (1972: 114)mentions the ease of learning concrete words and especially series, but adds that difficulties arise when the students use these words in sentences. For this reason he emphasizes the value of sentence contexts.

[3] Blank spaces are necessary for one major type of word that will not be found in the English list--words native to only one language. For example, under food a Russian student might add 'borsch, caviar, bliny, zakuska, kolbasa, vodka' while a Spanish student might add 'tamale, taco, chili, enchilada'.

[4] Lado (1964: 116-20) suggests that beginning courses concentrate on grammatical rules, and that intermediate and advanced courses then present the large amounts of vocabulary needed to fill out these rules and complete a mastery of 'everyday usage'. I believe that it is indeed essential to present the more important grammatical rules in a beginning course, but almost all language textbook series present large amounts of vocabulary words at all levels of instruction.

[5] The most representative volume of this series is Heinz Oehler's Grundwortschatz Deutsch (1966). This work is a trilingual introduction to German, and the preface describes the system of basic vocabulary and advanced specialized vocabularies that is found in the other volumes of the series. The other volumes are for speakers of German wishing to learn English, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Latin, and Classical Greek.

[6] The most useful work for an American student is Bildwörterbuch Englisch-Deutsch (1957). Since the series is published in Leipzig there is much 'socialist realism' in the illustrations, and the items and institutions of everyday life are those of a socialist state. In addition to French, Spanish, and Italian, the series also includes Russian and the languages of the satellite states of Europe: Polish, Czech, Hungarian, and Rumanian.

[8] My computerized study uses the nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs of Eaton 1961 rearranged into the categories given in Table 1. I use the Eaton frequency annotations because they are dictionary counts, not numbers from word counts. Computerized word lists such as Kučera 1967 or Carroll 1971 are useful for adding more modern words that may not be found in the Eaton study, but their frequency annotations are of little general use, since they do not distinguish part of speech or synonyms. Thus, May the month has the same listing as the modal 'may'; the month of March has the same form as the noun 'march' or the verb 'to march'. The noun plural or the 3rd sg verb form 'marches' are of course counted as a separate word.

[7] Such published texts receive little notice in the field of language teaching. In most cases the name of the author or compiler is not given. These books or booklets are seldom reviewed or mentioned in the professional literature on the language. Their appearance on the market is sporadic and their distribution and sales are uneven. I have mentioned some of the series which I have 'collected' out of personal interest, and there are doubtless many more useful vocabulary review texts in the major foreign languages which I have not mentioned.

References

Allen, Edward David and Rebecca M. Valette. 1972. Modern Language Classroom Techniques: A Handbook. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Bildwörterbuch Deutsch und Englisch. 1957. Leipzig: Verlag Enzyklopädie.

Brooks, Nelson. 1964. Language and Language Learning: Theory and Practice. 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Carroll, John B., Peter Davies, and Barry Richman. 1971. The American Heritage Word Frequency Book. New York: American Heritage Publishing Co.

Eaton, Helen S., comp. 1961. An English-French-German-Spanish Word Frequency Dictionary. New York: Dover Publications.

Josselson, Harry Hirsch. 1953. Russian Word Count and Frequency Analysis of the Grammatical Categories of Standard Literary Russian. Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press (rpt. New York: Kraus Reprints, 1967).

Katzner, Kenneth. 1962. A Russian Review Text. New York: Random House.

Kučera, Henry and W. Nelson Francis. 1967. Computational Analysis of Present-Day American English. Providence: Brown Univ. Press.

Lado, Robert. 1964. Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Oehler, Heinz. 1966. Grundwortschatz Deutsch-Essential German-Allemand fondamental. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag.

Paternost, Joseph. 1967. Review of A Word Count of Spoken Russian: The Soviet Usage, by Nicholas P. Vakar. Slavic and East European Journal 11. 113-14.

Steinfeldt, Ja. A. 1963. The Russian Word Frequency Dictionary. Moscow: Progress.

Vakar, Nicholas P. 1966. A Word Count of Spoken Russian: The Soviet Usage. Columbus: The Ohio State Univ. Press.

_____. 1967. Statistical methods in the analysis of Russian. Slavic and East European Journal 11. 59-65.

Wilkins, D. A. 1972. Linguistics in Language Teaching. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Table 1

The headword for each category is given in one or two main words. In this overview the headword does not give a complete or detailed idea of the various words in its category.

1. world
   - the country
   - mountain
   - water
2. agriculture
   - crops
3. city
   - store, shop
   - castle, palace
4. weather
5. element, mineral
   - metal
   - wood, lumber
   - element
   - color
6. animal (domestic)
   - animal (wild)
7. bird
8. fish
9. insect
10. tree
    - plant
    - flower
11. time
    - day
    - calendar
12. profession, occupation
13. administration
    - management
    - technique
14. person
    - friend
    - fool, idiot
15. family
16. life
17. food, meal
    - bread
    - meat
    - vegetable
    - fruit
    - dessert
    - drink
18. dwelling, residence
    - house
    - living room
    - dining room
    - kitchen
    - bedroom
    - bathroom
19. machine
    - tool, implement
    - box, container
20. clothes
    - suit
    - dress
    - cloth
    - sewing
    - jewelry
    - costume
21. body
    - head
    - trunk
    - limbs
    - organ

Table 1 (contd.)

22. sickness
    hospital
23. luck, chance
    success
    failure
    misfortune
24. mind, intellect
25. feeling, sense
    mood (happiness, anger)
    love
    care, worry
    sorrow
    honor, respect
    hate, hatred
26. education
    school
27. science
28. culture
    painting
    sculpture
    theater
    music
    musical instrument
29. literature
30. language
31. communication
    conversation
    truth, lie
    answer
    discussion
    sign, symbol
32. writing
    book
    newspaper
    letter
33. religion
    church
    worship, services
    clergy
    marriage
    funeral
    superstition
34. company, society
    way of life, habit, custom
35. club, association
    hospitality
    smile, laugh
    gift, present
36. hobby
    toy
    sport
    riding
    hunting
    cards
    chess
37. trip, journey
    holiday, vacation
    transportation
    automobile
    shipping, ship
    airplane
38. country, nation
    government
    monarchy (king)
    election
    congress, legislature
    revolution, revolt
39. law
    court
    crime
    prison
40. economy
    money
    finance
    bank

Table 1 (contd.)

41. war
    campaign, victory
    weapon, arm
    Army, Navy, Air Force
    officer
    military unit
    naval ship
42. thing, object
    matter, thing, affair
    manner, way
    order, disorder
    quality, characteristic
    cause, effect
43. part, particle
    top, bottom, side
    point, dot
    space, place
    direction
44. number
    quantity
    measurement
45. act, deed
    renewal
    motion
    activity
46. phenomenon
    sound, noise
    radiance, glow

Table 2

Frequency *	English	German	Danish	Swedish	Norwegian
	GEOGRAPHICAL				
1.0	world	Welt	verden	värld	verden
1.0	earth	Erde	jord	jord	jord
1.0	land, country	Land	land	land	land
1.0	place	Stätte, Ort	sted	ort	sted
1.5	mountain	Berg	bjerg	berg	berg
2.1	lake	See	sø	sjö	sjø
1.4	coast	Küste	kyst	kust	kyst
1.7	border	Grenze	graense	gräns	grense
1.7	kingdom	Reich	rige	rike	rike
1.6	north	Norden	nord	nord	nord
2.0	east	Osten	øst	öst	øst
2.2	south	Süden	syd	syd	syd, sør
1.9	west	Westen	vest	väst	vest

* These frequency numbers are from Eaton 1961 and represent averaged 'thousand groups' from the relative frequencies of English, French, German, and Spanish word frequency dictionaries. Thus, a word with 1.0 is in the first thousand group in all languages; a word with 2.0 has an average frequency placing it in the second thousand group, and so on.

Table 2 (contd.)

	TIME				
1.0	morning	Morgen	morgen	morg, morgon	morgen
1.9	afternoon	Nachmittag	eftermiddag	eftermiddag	ettermiddag
1.0	evening	Abend	aften	aft, afton	aften
1.0	day	Tag	dag	dag	dag
1.0	night	Nacht	nat	natt	natt
1.0	hour	Stunde, Uhr	time	timme	time
1.5	minute	Minute	minut	minut	minutt
2.3	second	Sekunde	sekund	sekund	sekund
1.1	week	Woche	uge	vecka	uke
1.0	month	Monat	måned	måned	måned
1.0	year	Jahr	år	år	år
1.6	summer	Sommer	sommer	sommar	sommer
2.3	autumn	Herbst	høst	höst	høst
1.4	winter	Winter	vinter	vinter	vinter
2.1	spring	Frühling	vår	vår	vår

Note: the list will also show how languages or language groups differ in their representation of various words. Compare the Scandinavian equivalents for 'hour' based on the cognate 'time', and 'spring' borrowed from the Latin ver (E cognate 'vernal').

ANOTHER COPY IN COMPACT FORM.

Table 1

1. world
   the country
   mountain
   water

2. agriculture
   crops

3. city
   store, shop
   castle, palace

4. weather

5. element, mineral
   metal
   wood, lumber
   element
   color

6. animal (domestic)
   animal (wild)

7. bird

8. fish

9. insect

10. tree
    plant
    flower

11. time
    day
    calendar

12. profession, occupation

13. administration
    management
    technique

14. person
    friend
    fool, idiot

15. family

16. life

17. food, meal
    bread
    meat
    vegetable
    fruit
    dessert
    drink

18. dwelling, residence
    house
    living room
    dining room
    kitchen
    bedroom
    bathroom

19. machine
    tool, implement
    box, container

20. clothes
    suit
    dress
    cloth
    sewing
    jewelry
    costume

21. body
    head
    trunk
    limbs
    organ

22. sickness
    hospital

23. luck, chance
    success
    failure
    misfortune

24. mind, intellect

25. feeling, sense
    mood (happiness, anger)
    love
    care, worry
    sorrow
    honor, respect
    hate, hatred

26. education
    school

27. science

28. culture
    painting
    sculpture
    theater
    music
    musical instrument

29. literature

30. language

31. communication
    conversation
    truth, lie
    answer
    discussion
    sign, symbol

32. writing
    book
    newspaper
    letter

33. religion
    church
    worship, rel. services
    clergy
    marriage
    funeral
    superstition

34. company, society
    way of life, habit, custom

35. club, association
    hospitality
    smile, laugh
    gift, present

36. hobby
    toy
    sport
    riding, hunting
    cards, chess

37. trip, journey
    holiday, vacation
    transportation (train, bus)
    automobile
    shipping, ship
    airplane

38. country, nation
    government
    monarchy
    election
    congress, legislature
    revolution

39. law
    court
    crime, prison

40. economy
    money, finance
    bank

41. war
    weapon, arm
    Army, Navy, Air Force
    officer
    mil. unit
    navy ship

42. thing, object
    matter, thing
    manner, way
    quality, characteristic
    cause, effect

43. part, top, bottom
    point, space, place
    direction

44. number, quantity
    measurement

45. act, deed
    motion

46. phenomenon
    sound, noise
    radiance, glow